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WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system for the shared storage of computer-based data, comprising:
 - at least one client processor which forwards and receives computer data files;
 - a plurality of storage nodes, at least one of the storage nodes being in communication with the at least one client processor;
 - the storage nodes further being in communication with one another;
 - wherein at least one of the storage nodes receives computer data files from the at least one computer processor and distributes the contents in the data files to at least one other of the plurality of storage nodes.
2. The invention of claim 1, further comprising replicating at least one of the computer data files received from the client processor to one other of the plurality of storage nodes so that there are at least two copies of the computer data files in the system.
3. The invention of claim 2, further comprising encrypting the computer data files.
4. The invention of claim 2, further comprising compressing the computer data files.
5. The invention of claim 2, further comprising storing at the storage nodes only those blocks of data that have changed over a predetermined time period.
6. The invention of claim 1, wherein the storage node is comprised of at least one disk node for storing the computer data files and one or more port nodes to manage and distribute data received from the at least one client processor to the at least one disk node.